

Importance of a Basic Boating Course

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Do you believe that a gunwale is an aquatic mammal or a large fish? Do you know the difference between a beam and a keel? How about between a nun and a can? Do you know which way to adjust your vessel's course to avoid a head on collision on the water? If not, you need to take America's Boating Course.

If you reside in North Carolina and were born after January 1, 1988 and you operate any vessel with more than a 10 horsepower motor, you must complete a boater education safety course approved by NASBLA (the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators). This requirement applies to those operating personal watercraft as well—something that many folks may tend to overlook.

Long before we even had roads and so called "rules of the road", most local navigation was by boat. Over time, a vast collection of local knowledge, safety, navigational and courtesy standards evolved on and around our waters. Interestingly, these generally accepted standards adopted on our waters later became the foundation for land-based rules of the road. Today, although most everyone takes driver's training and takes a driver's test before obtaining their driver's license, many people take to the water without even thinking about boating safety, how to use a marine radio, how to signal fellow boaters, and how to interpret and use navigation aids.

Although there are other options for completing required boating safety training, there is no substitute for in person classroom instruction provided by experienced instructors. Whether you are a novice or an old salt, at the successful completion of the America's Boating Course, you will earn a Certificate of Completion and a handy wallet card, which, when presented to a NC Wildlife or Coast Guard official will immediately confer confidence that you know that a gunwale, which rhymes with "funnel" is the upper edge or rail of a boat. It also might qualify you for a discount on your boat insurance. More importantly, you will know that all vessels approaching head on should pass port to port on our waters, or left side to left side as on US highways.

This article is given courtesy of your local America's Boating Club of the Pamlico. This is the perfect time of the year to consider a general boating safety course. The America's Boating Course, which meets the requirement for **NC State Boat**

Operator Certificate, is being given 2/24 and 3/2. To register or learn more information contact Kelly at 551-427-0585 or email pspsed@gmail.com. We also invite you to visit our website to learn about more boating safety and education at <https://pamlicosailandpowersquadron.org>